



THE POWER OF COMMUNITIES (AND THEIR ALLIES) IN IMPROVING HEALTH: WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER



04.10.14

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PERE'S MISSION

PERE was founded to support communities working to build stronger, healthier, and more just communities through reliable research.

PERE conducts research and facilitate discussions on issues of environmental justice, regional inclusion, and social movement building.

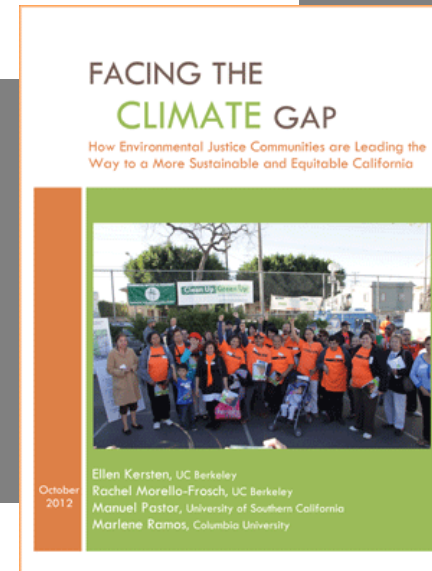
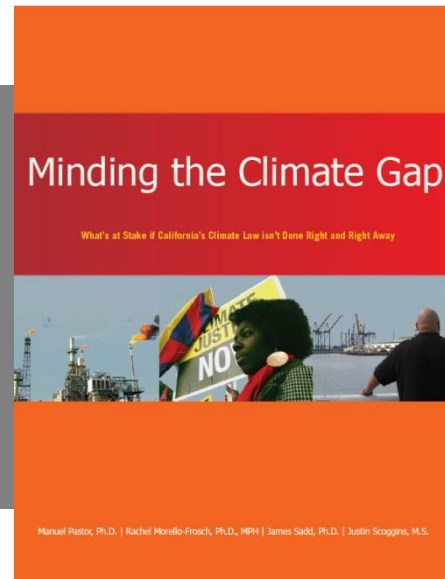
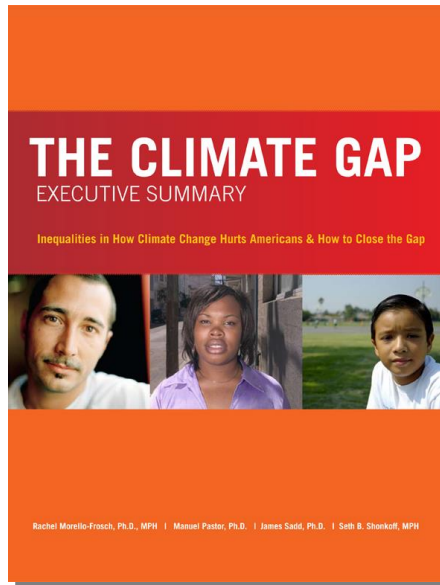


PERE'S MISSION

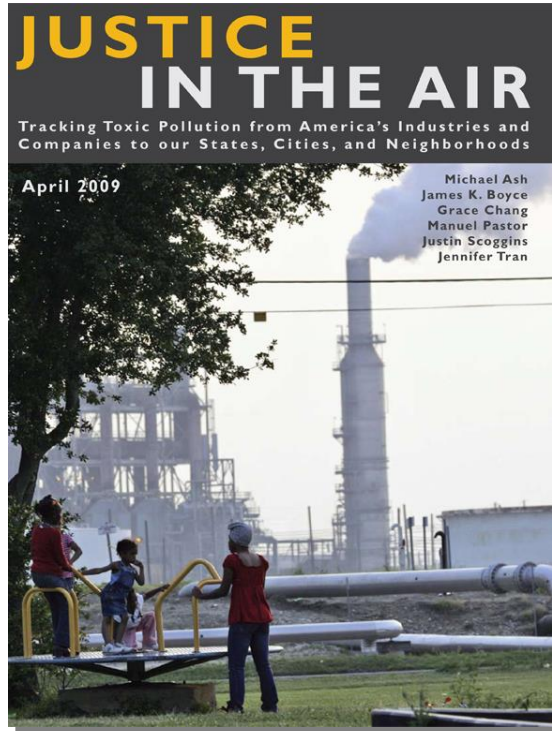
We seek and support **direct collaborations** with community-based organizations in research and other activities, trying to forge a new model of how university and community can work together for the common good.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

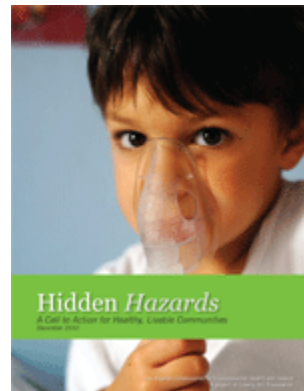


ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



Most **technical** of our research: GIS, spatial-autocorrelation, etc.

So how is **community involved**? How do we **build trust**? And how does **change occur**?



Houston, we have a problem . . .

- Bay Area has been the site of significant environmental justice organizing in key locations – Bayview, Richmond, West Oakland
- But missing was a framework study establishing general pattern in way convincing to policy makers and agency personnel
- We entered into a multi-year collaboration with thirty-five different EJ, environmental and public health groups





Still Toxic After All These Years

Air Quality and Environmental Justice in the San Francisco Bay Area



February 2007

Manuel Pastor, UC Santa Cruz
James Sadd, Occidental College
Rachel Morello-Frosch, Brown University



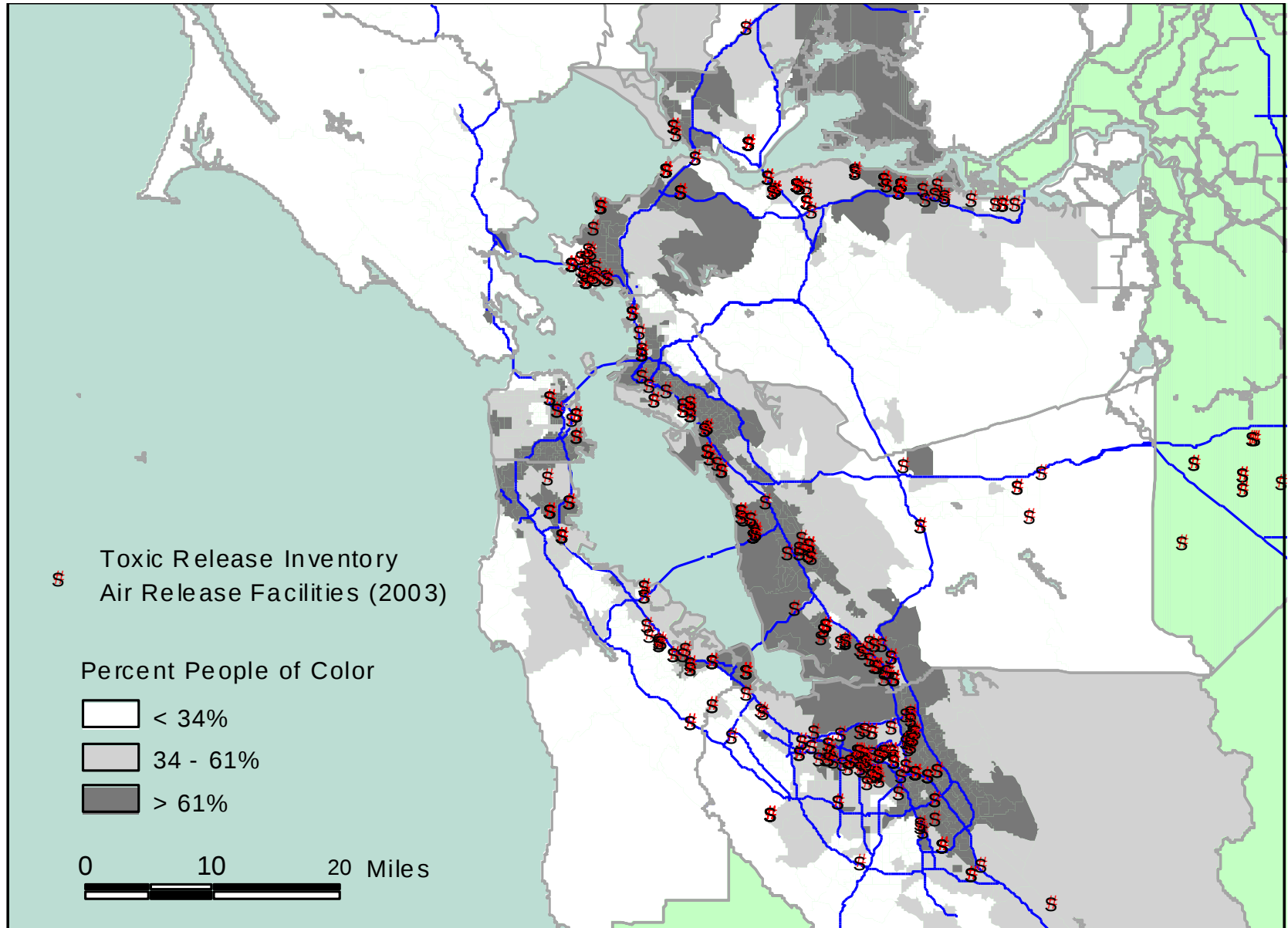
Center for
Justice, Tolerance
& Community
University
of California
Santa Cruz

Prepared for the Bay Area Environmental Health Collaborative by the
Center for Justice, Tolerance & Community, University of California, Santa Cruz



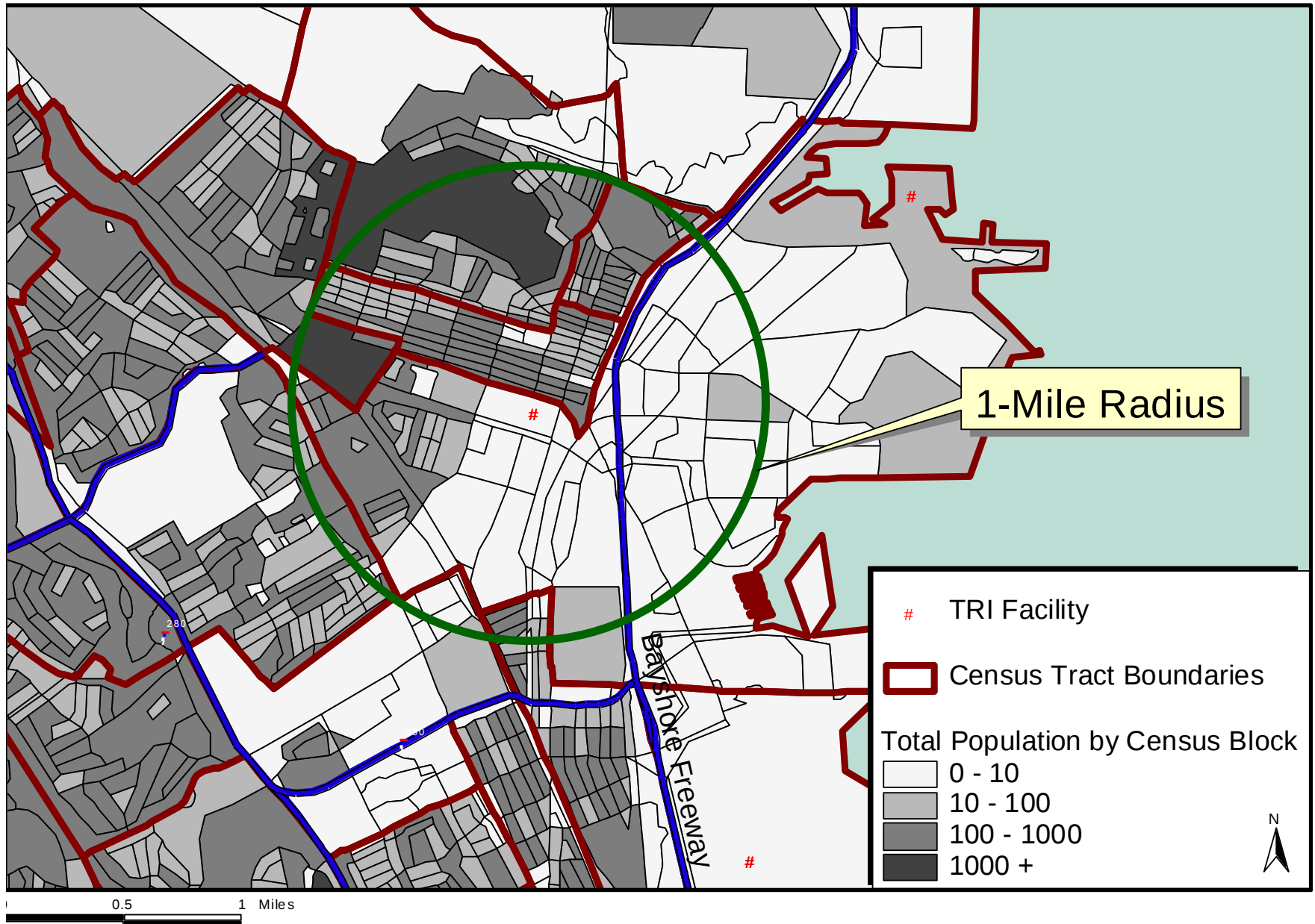
At First Glance . . .

TRI Facilities Relative to Neighborhood Demographics

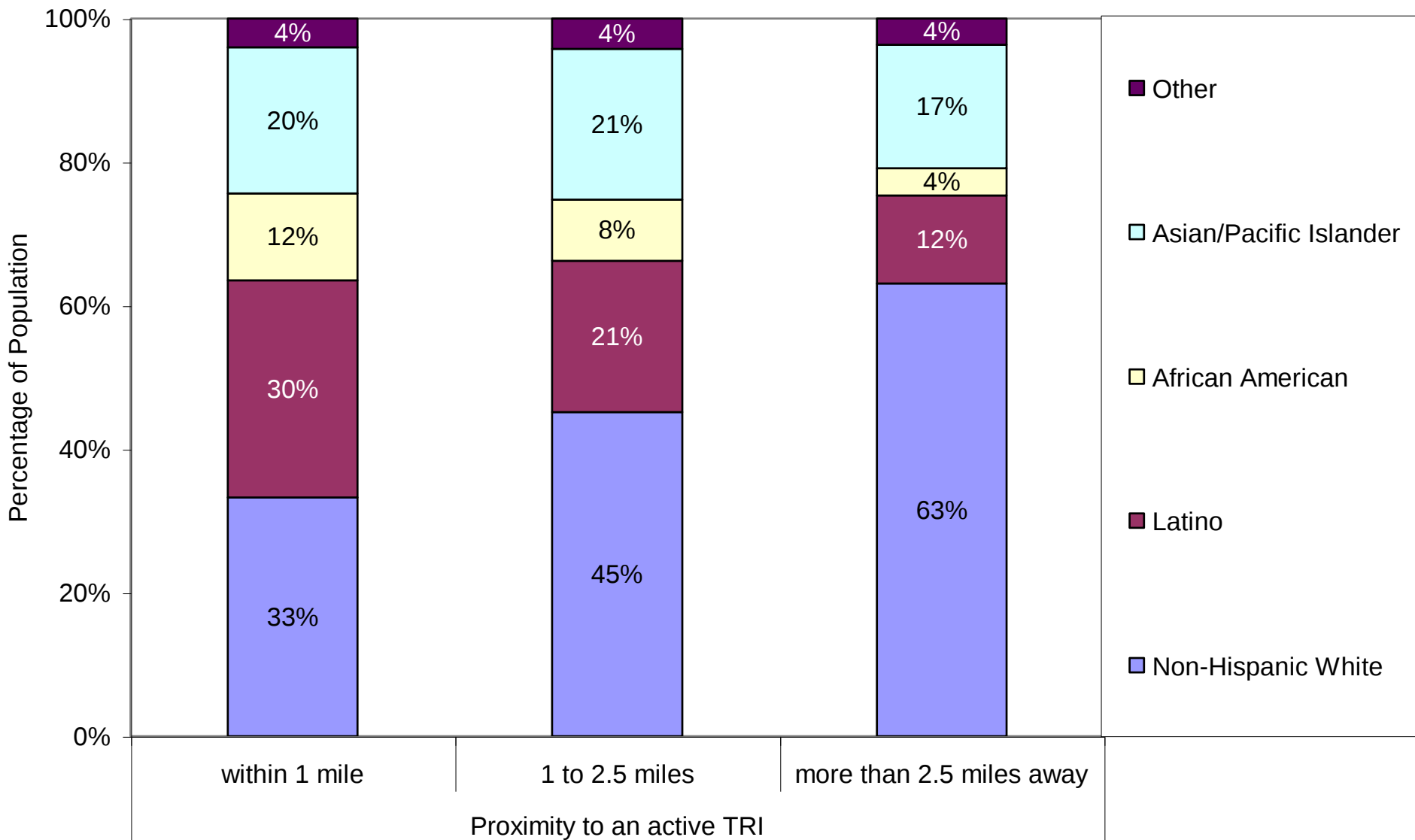


How do we determine TRI proximity?

The one-mile case

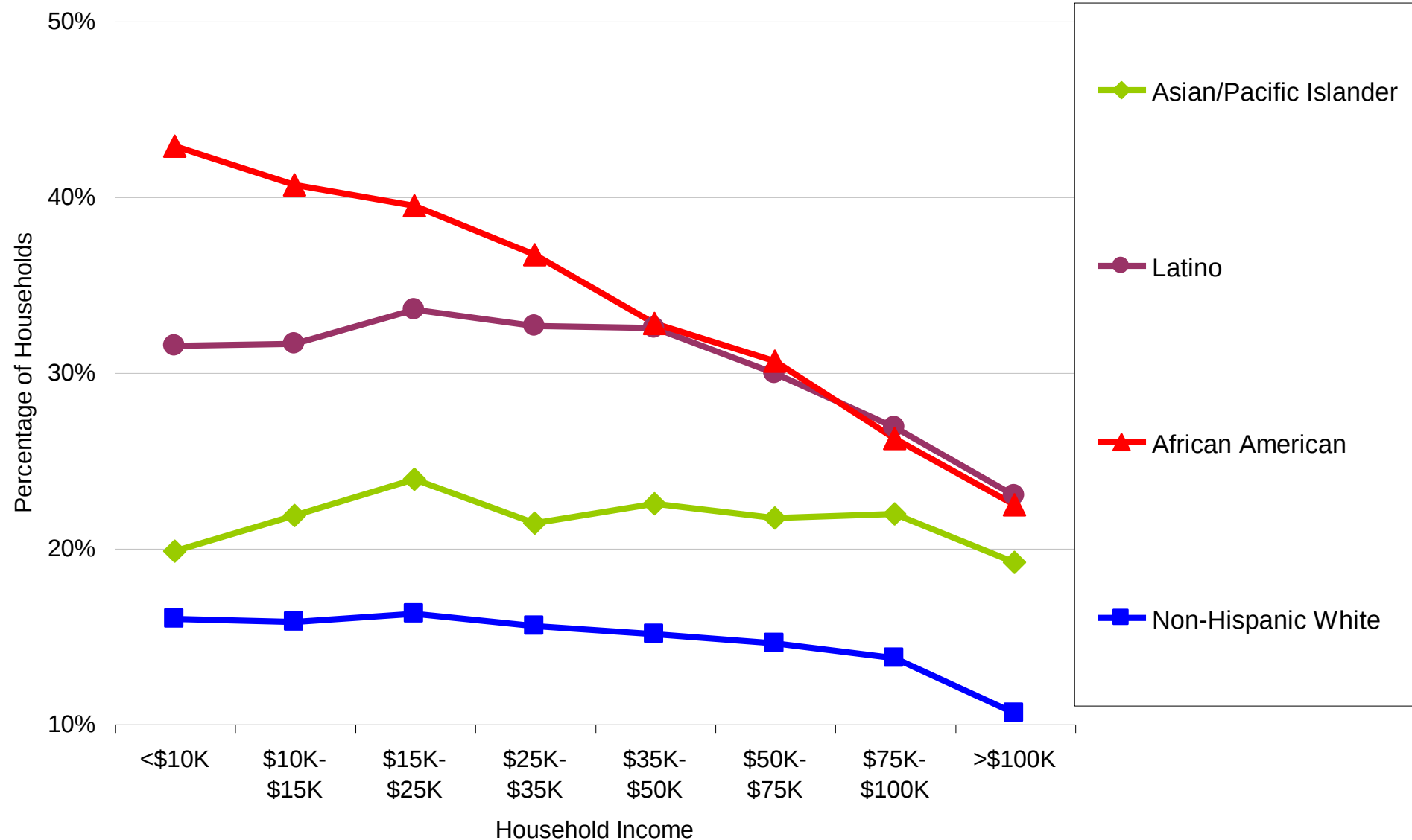


Population by Race/Ethnicity (2000) and Proximity to a TRI Facility with Air Releases (2003) in the 9-County Bay Area



But It Isn't Just Income . . .

Percentage Households within One Mile of an Active TRI (2003) by Income and Race/Ethnicity in the 9-County Bay Area



Making the Case, Making Change?

- Released a draft of the report at a science meeting, placed an opinion piece in the Chronicle, did a collective press conference at a refinery in Richmond, prepared academic paper focused on spatial autocorrelation issues as new cut on EJ



- Each one, teach one . . . Working with organizers about the science
- Helped to raise issues of cumulative impacts with policy makers . . .

Making the Case, Making Change?



But how can communities and allies work together not just to document disparities but to change underlying conditions?

From Documenting to Preventing Disparities: Environmental Justice Screening Methodology (EJSM)

- We have developed indicators of cumulative impact that:
 - Reflect research on air pollution, environmental justice, and health
 - Are transparent and relevant to policy-makers and communities
- Key Caveats:
 - Focus is mostly (currently) on air quality but now on climate vulnerability as well
 - Reliance on available secondary databases (to facilitate replication)
 - This is *screening* not *assessment*



Three Categories of Cumulative Impact

Proximity to hazards & sensitive land uses

- Air Resources Board land use guidelines (sensitive receptors)
- State data on environmental hazards

Health risk & exposure

- Available state and national data
- Modeling from emissions inventories

Social & health vulnerability

- Based on epidemiological literature on social determinants of health
- ACS 2005-2009 and state-level data

Climate change vulnerability

- Based on climate change and health literature
- Health impacts, social isolation

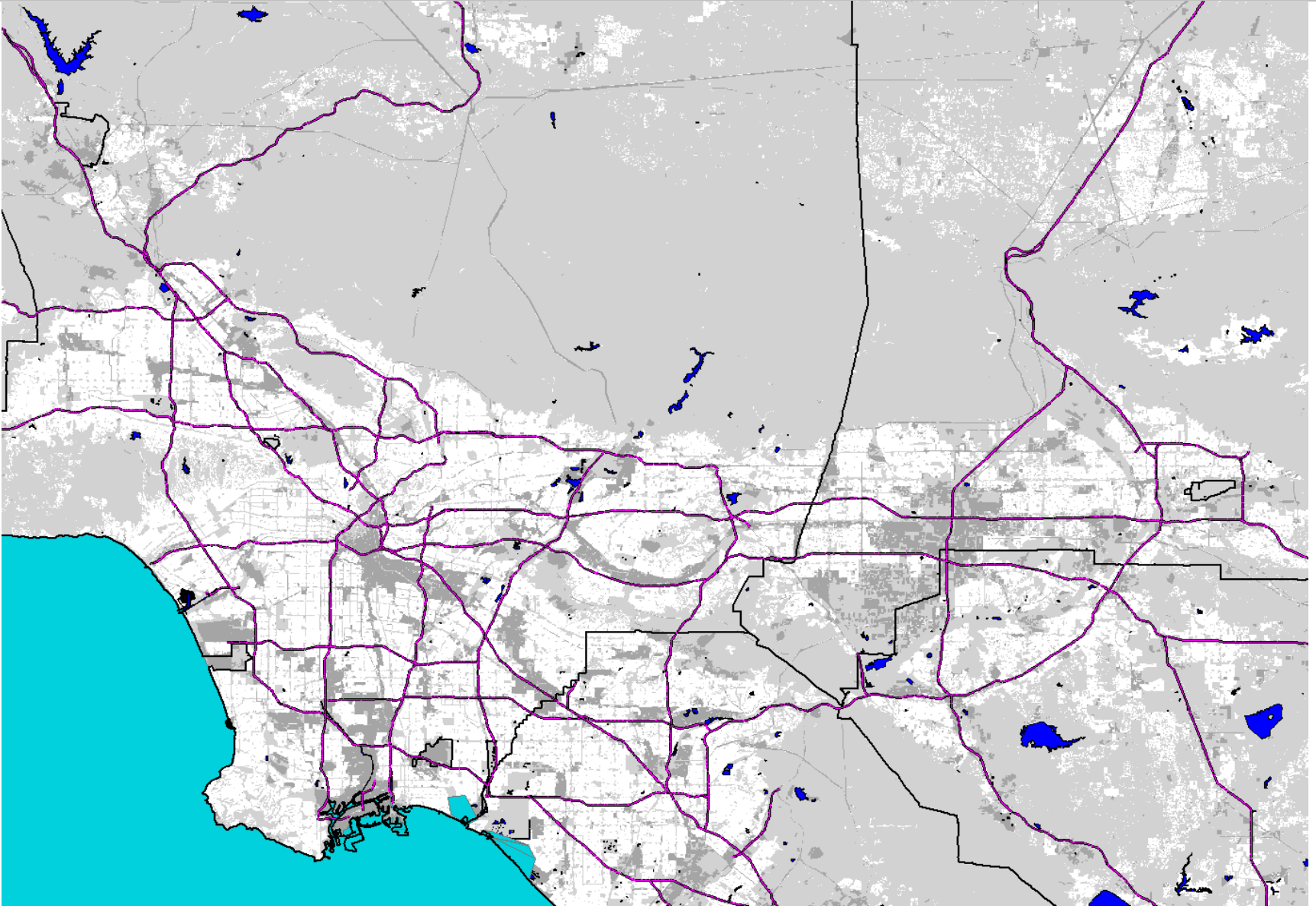


Land Use – Focus screening on where people live

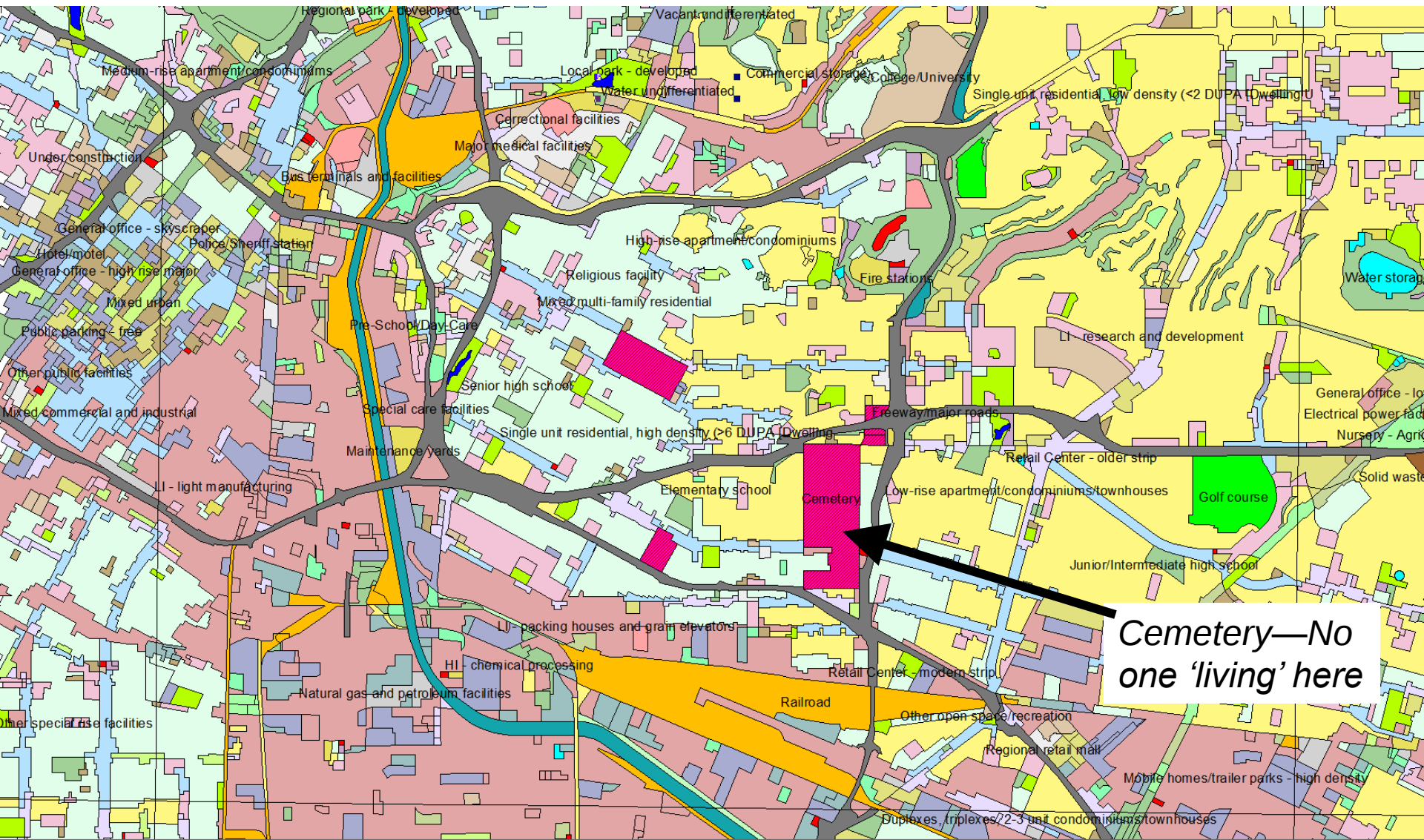
Dark Gray = Industrial, Transportation, etc.;

Light Gray = Open Space, Vacant, etc.

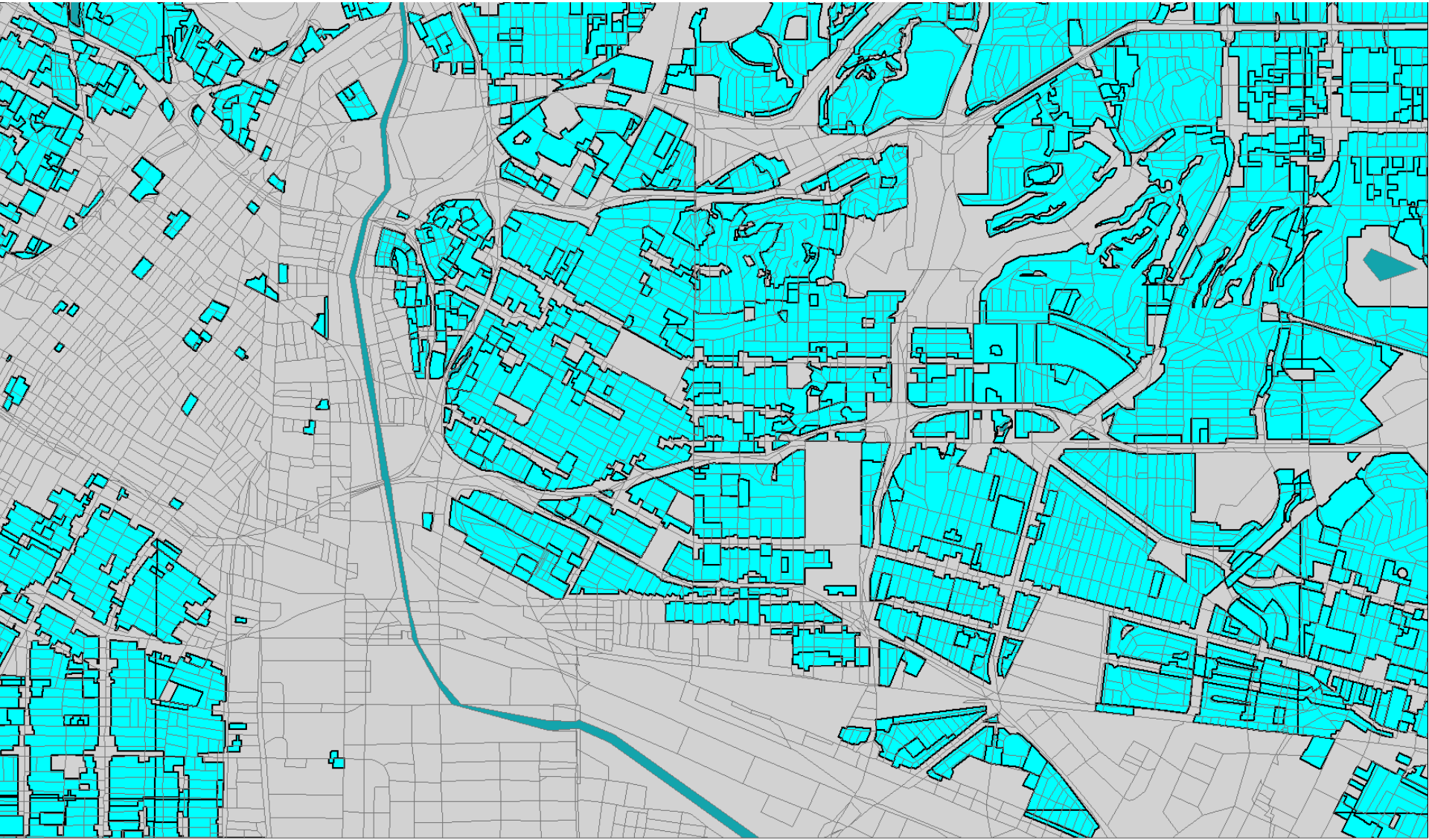
White = Residential and Sensitive Land Uses – only these areas are scored



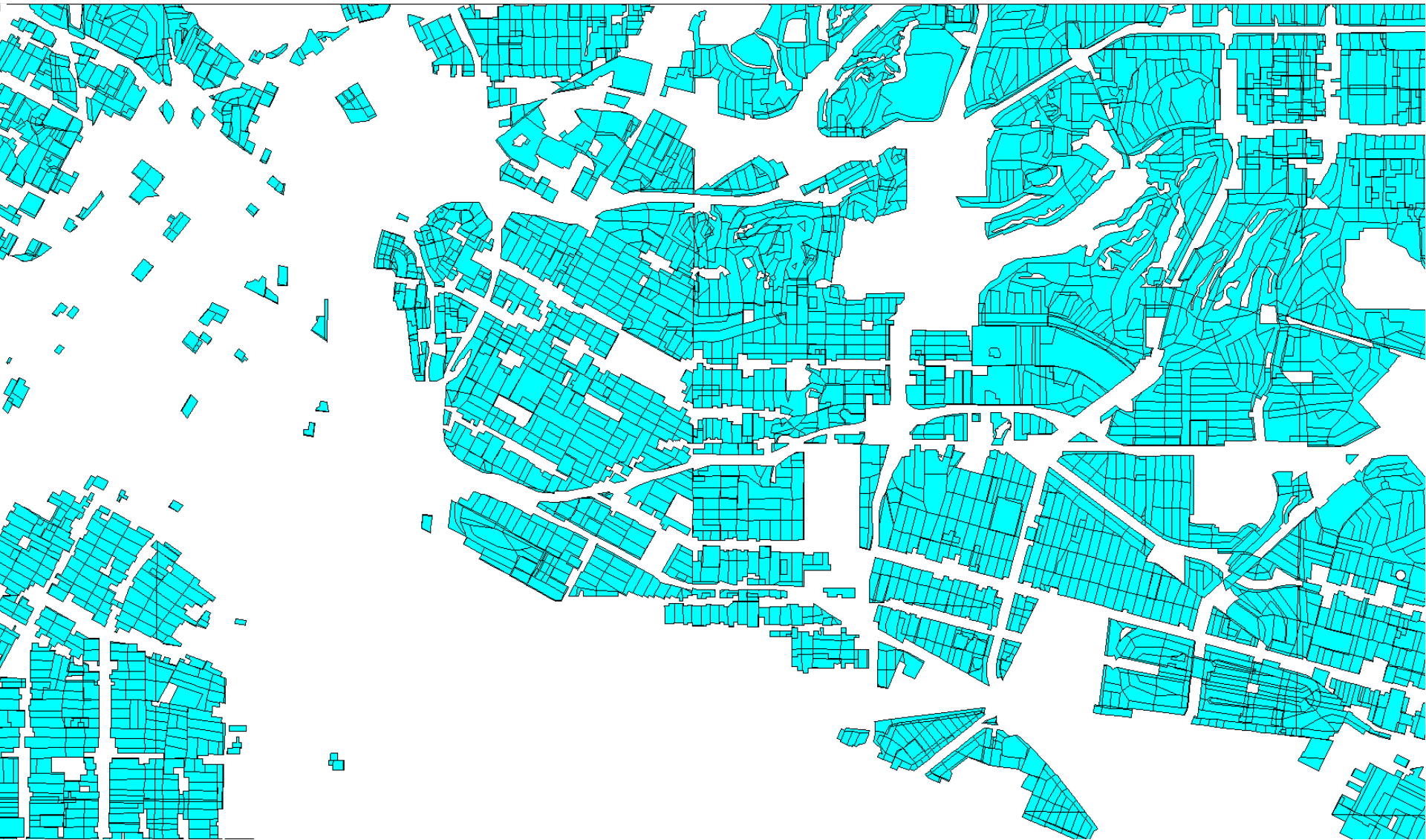
Southern California Assoc. of Governments (SCAG) 2005 Land Use Polygons



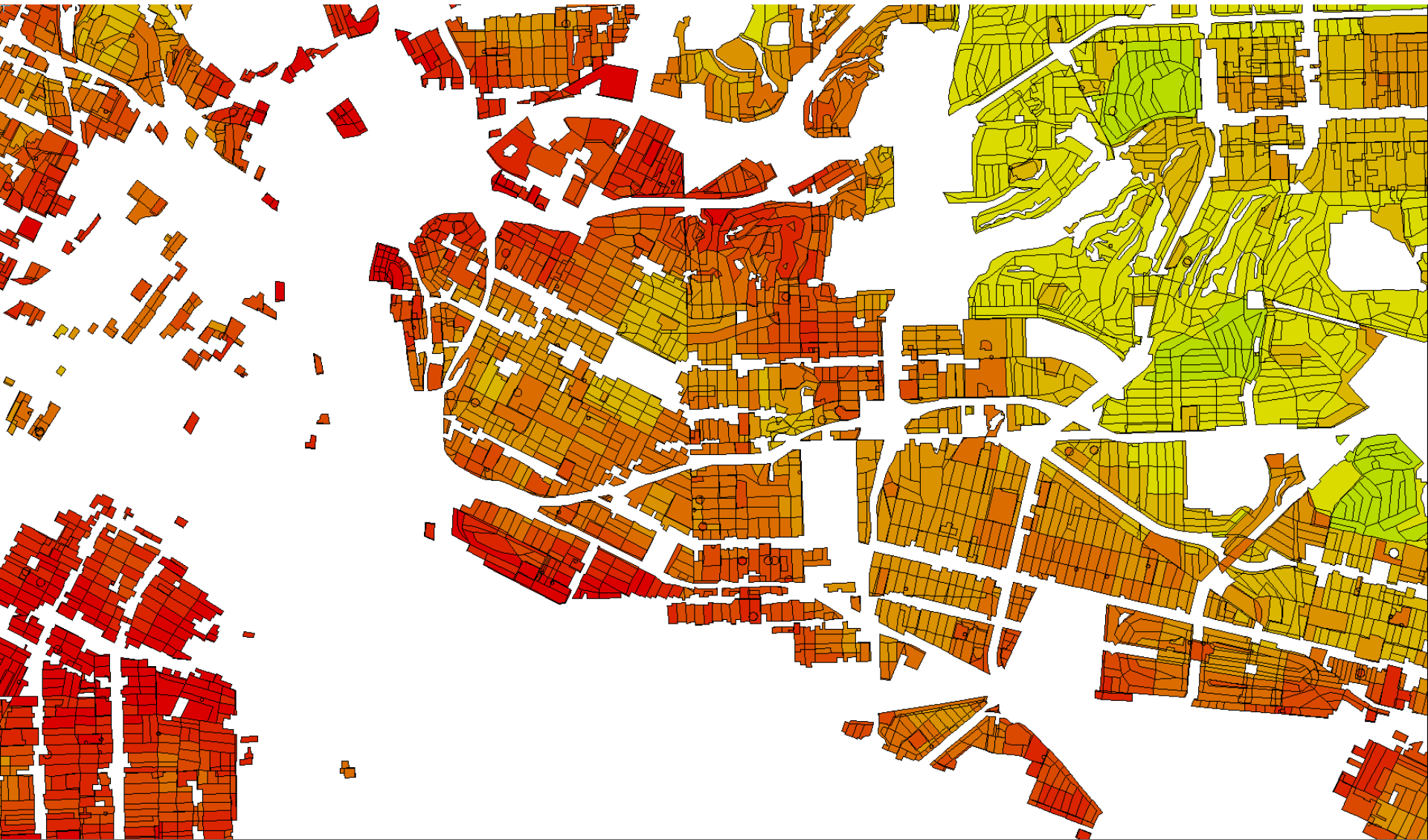
Intersect Land Use Polygons with Blocks



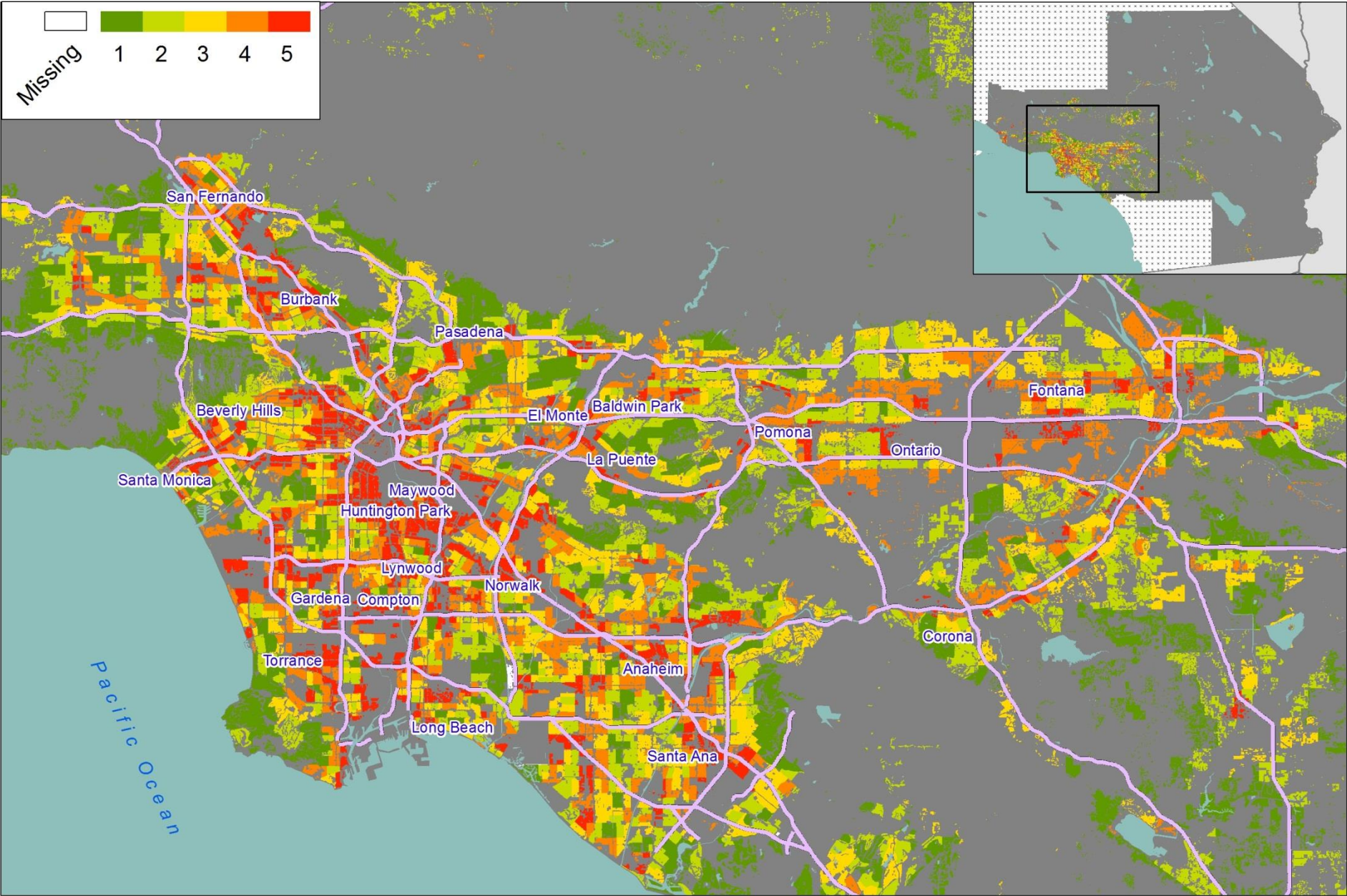
Result: Cumulative Impact (CI) Polygons, each associated with a specific block and land use



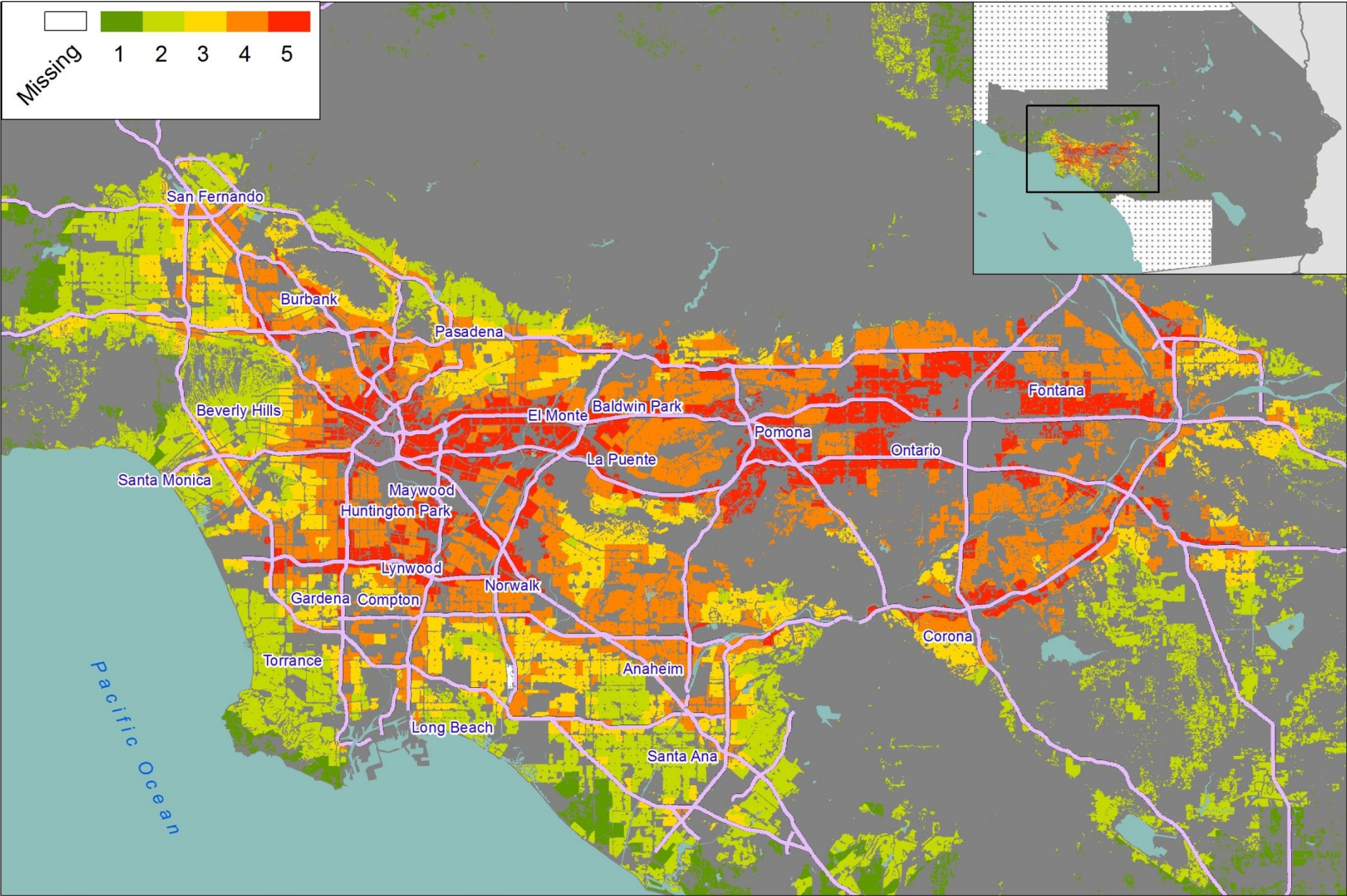
Each CI Polygon receives a Cumulative Impact (CI) Score



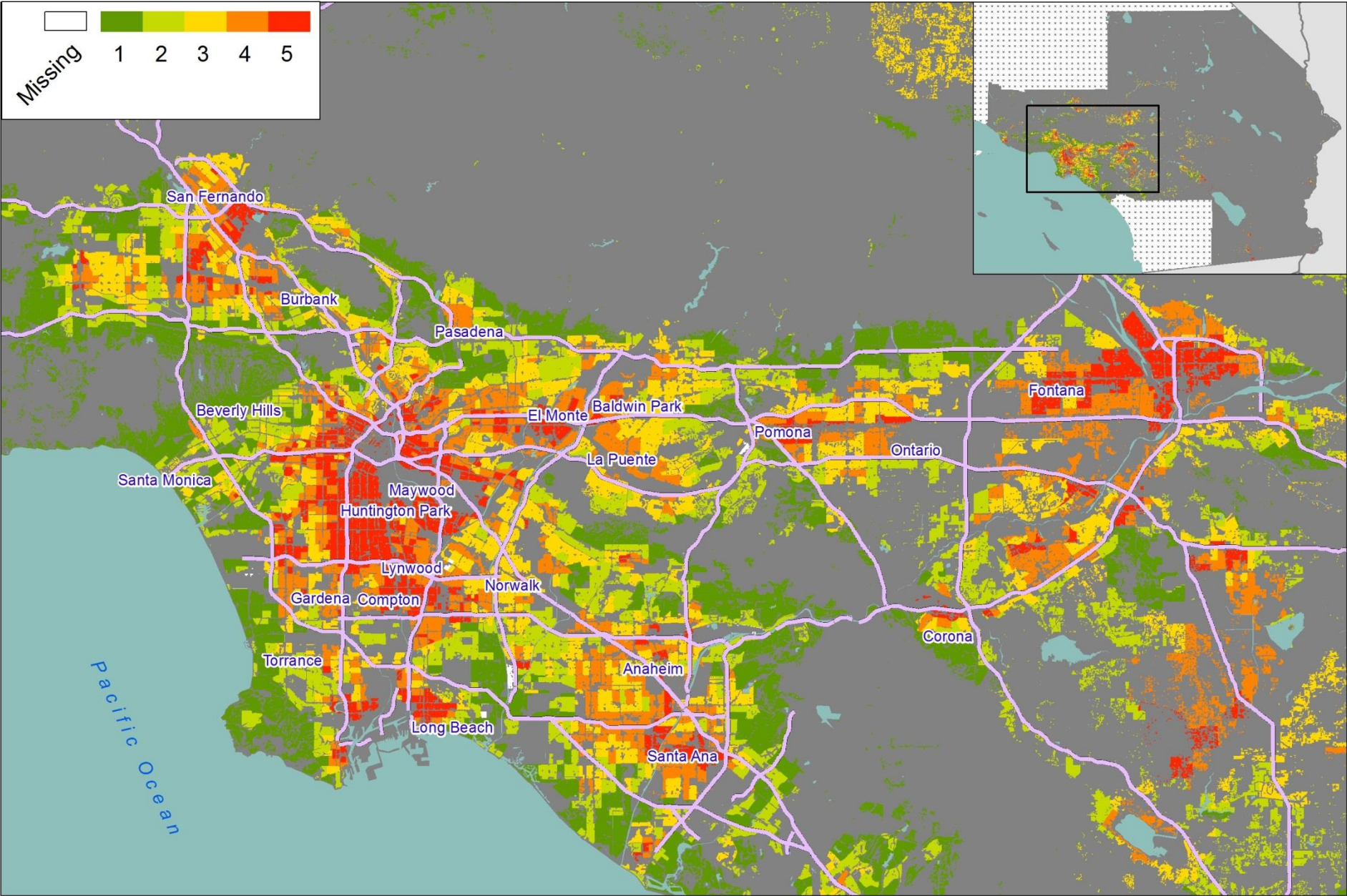
Hazard proximity and sensitive land use quintile scores at the tract level-- Southern California 6-County Area (Mapped on CI Polygons)



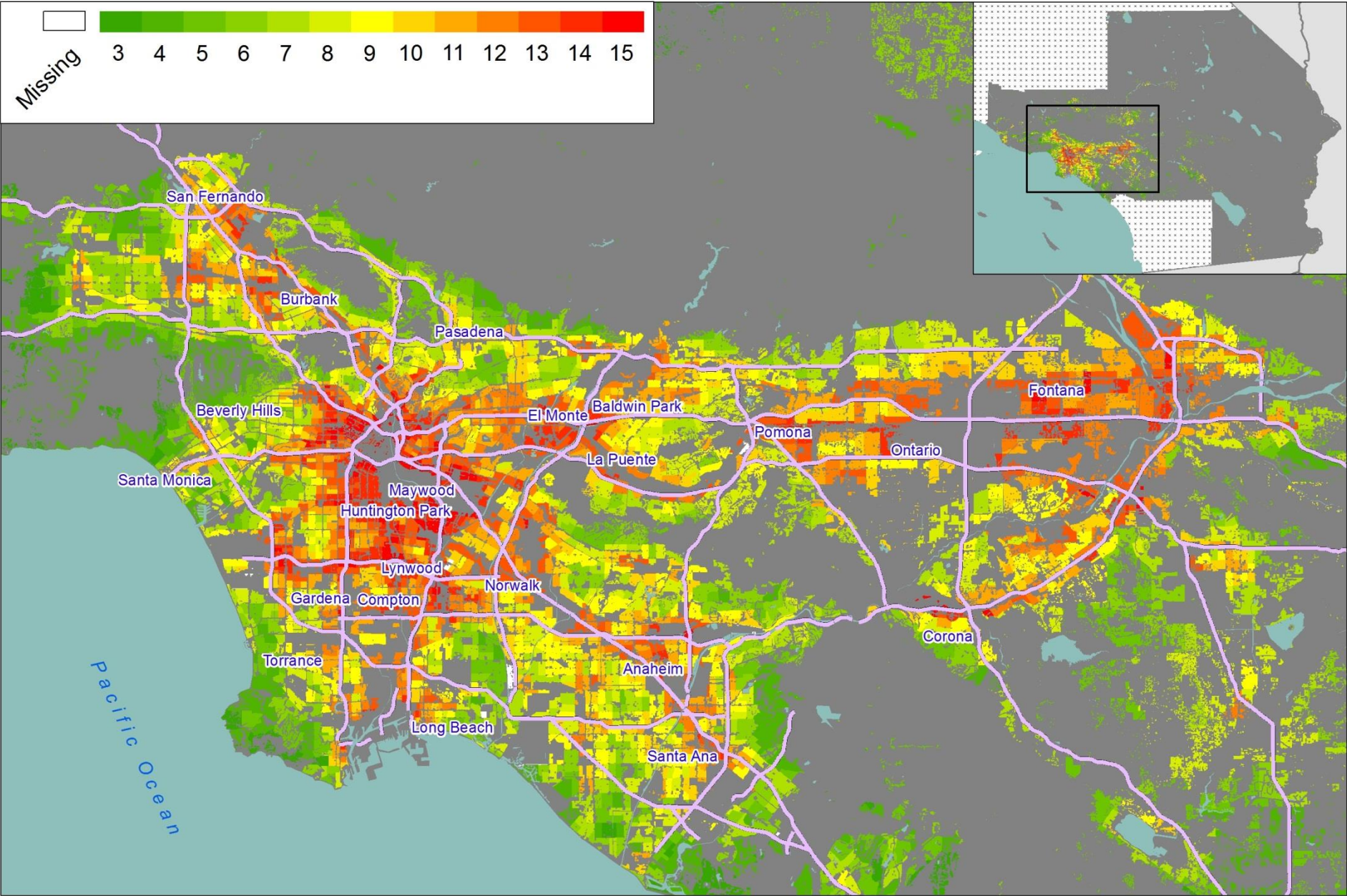
Air pollution exposure and health risk quintile score at the tract level-- Southern California 6-County Area (Mapped on CI Polygons)



Social and health vulnerability quintile scores at the tract level-- Southern California 6-County Area (Mapped on CI Polygons)



Final Cumulative Impacts Score-- Southern California 6-County Area (Mapped on CI Polygons)

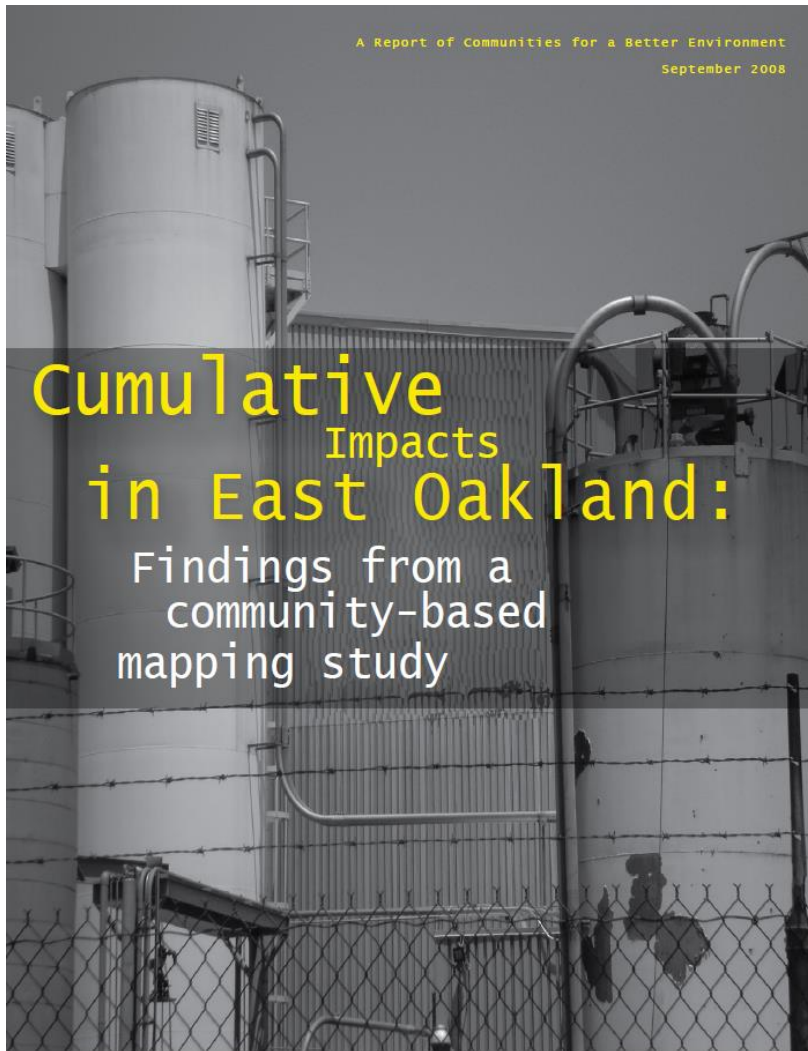


Contributions of Approach

- Has helped to inform OEHHA development of EnviroScreen – and we're working with state agency on this
- Has been of use in the debate about a Community Benefits Fund with proceeds from cap-and-trade
- Has provided a platform for community organizations to argue for additional attention, to suggest that metrics can be developed, and to insist on process



What Did It Illustrate About Participation?



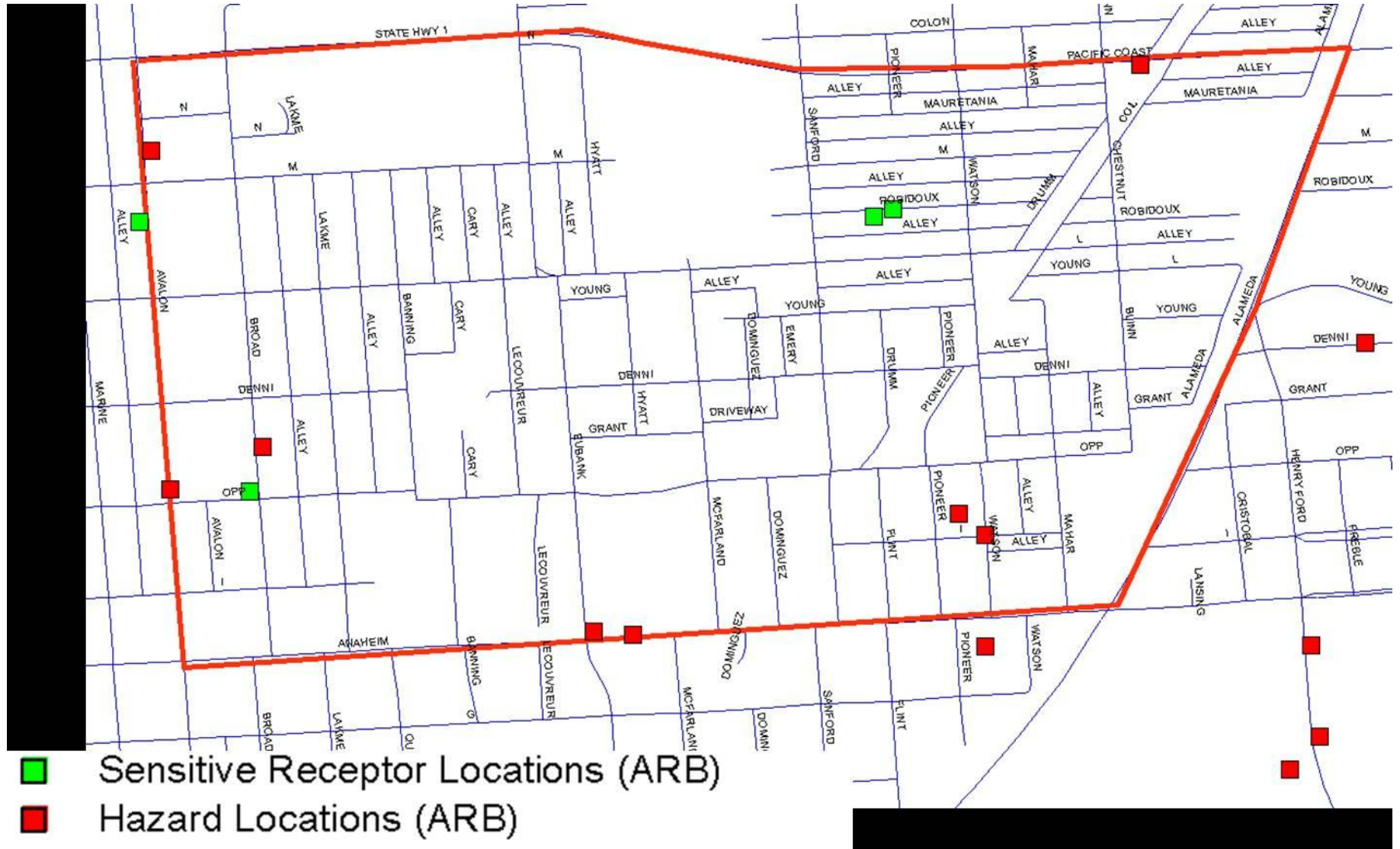
- Community kept engaged in highly technical product through parallel ground-truthing as well as just-in-time overview of method and input
- Process was filled with numerous inside-outside tensions, including agency concern about our degree of openness with community groups about the method

Los Angeles Ground-Truthing

- Coalition for a Safe Environment
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Eastyard Communities for Environmental Justice
- Liberty Hill Foundation
- Pacoima Beautiful
- Union de Vecinos / ELACC
- Comité Pro Uno
- Society for Positive Action
- California Safe Schools



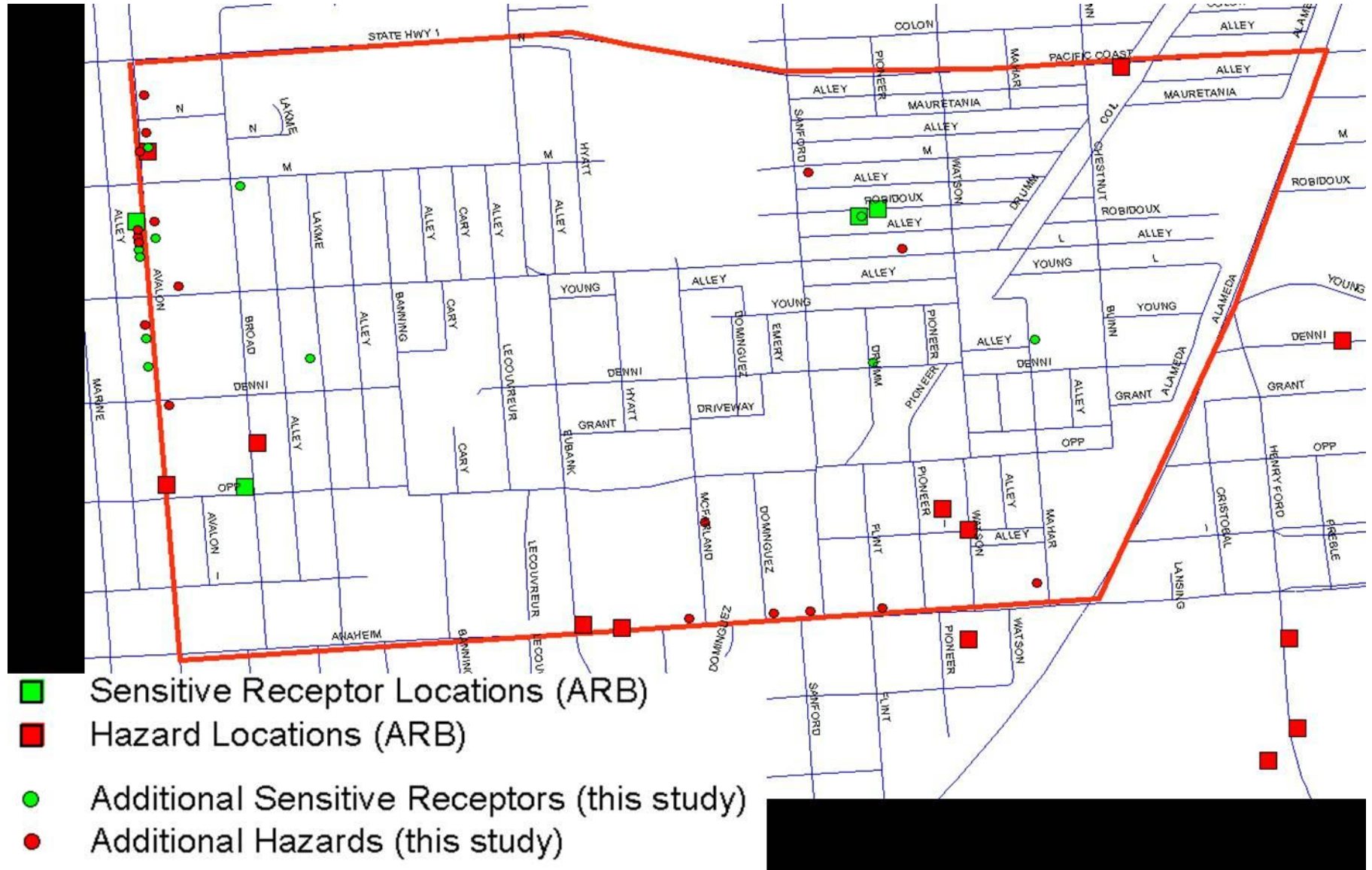
Wilmington – State Permitted Facilities



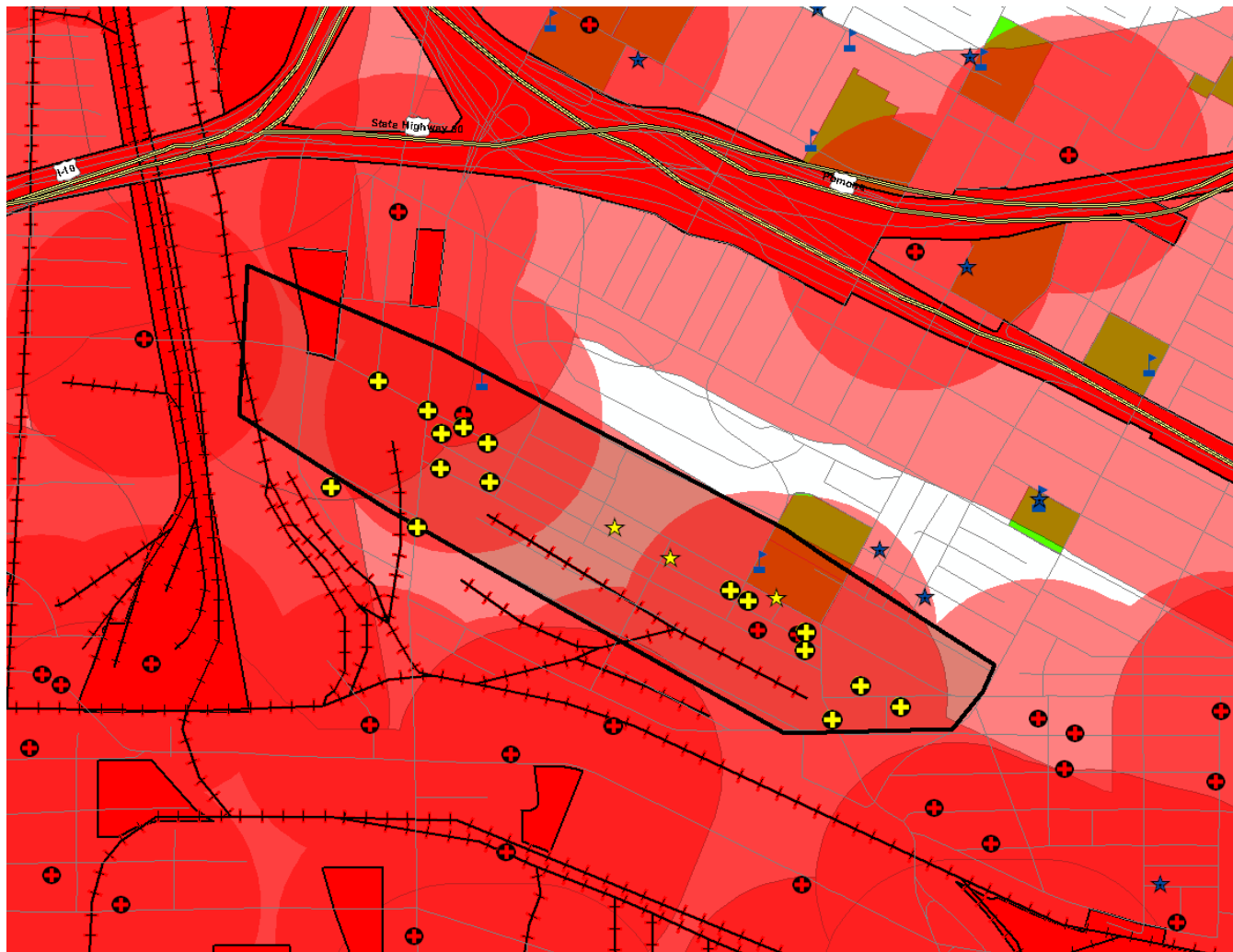




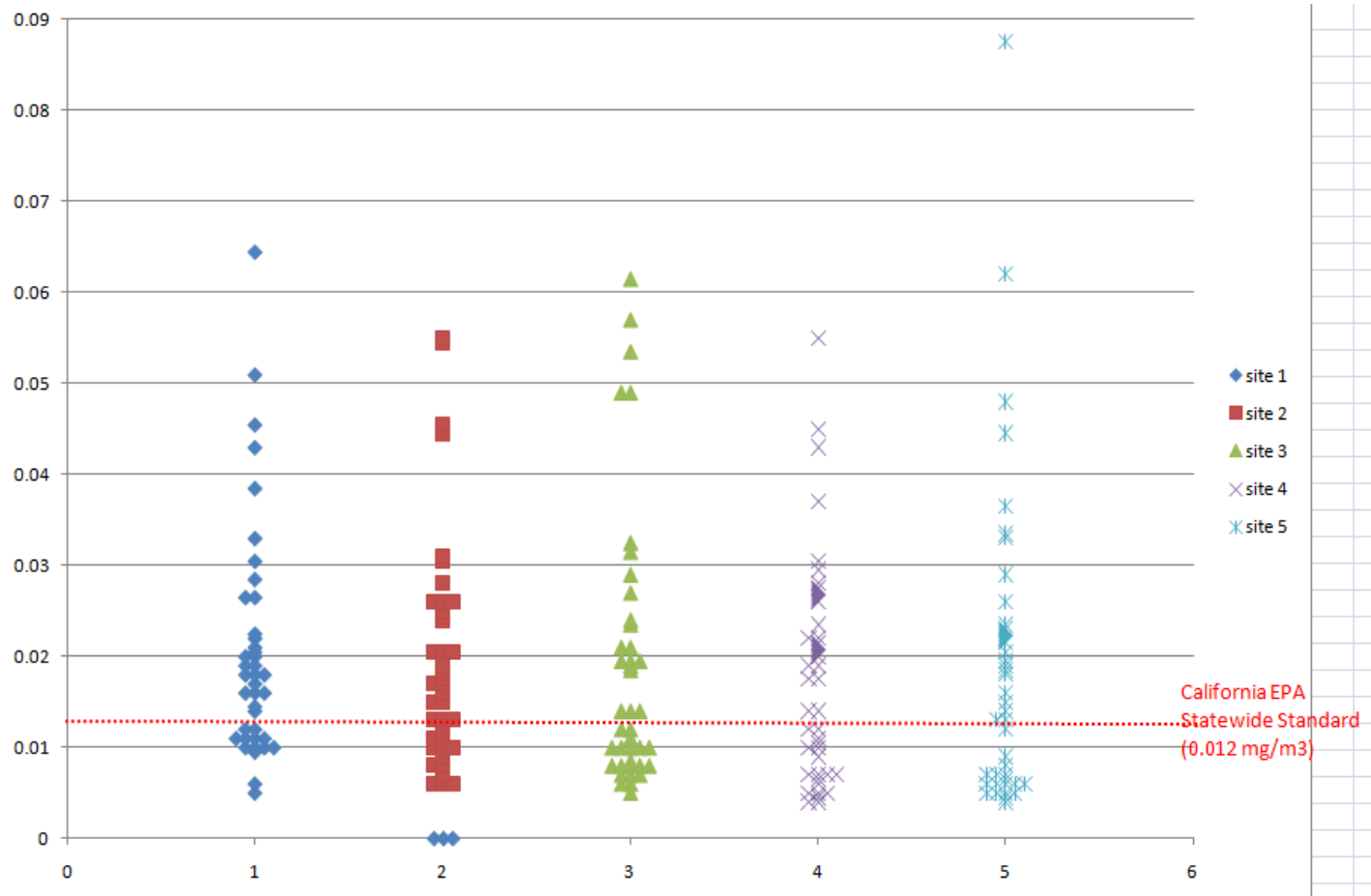
Wilmington – Community Observations

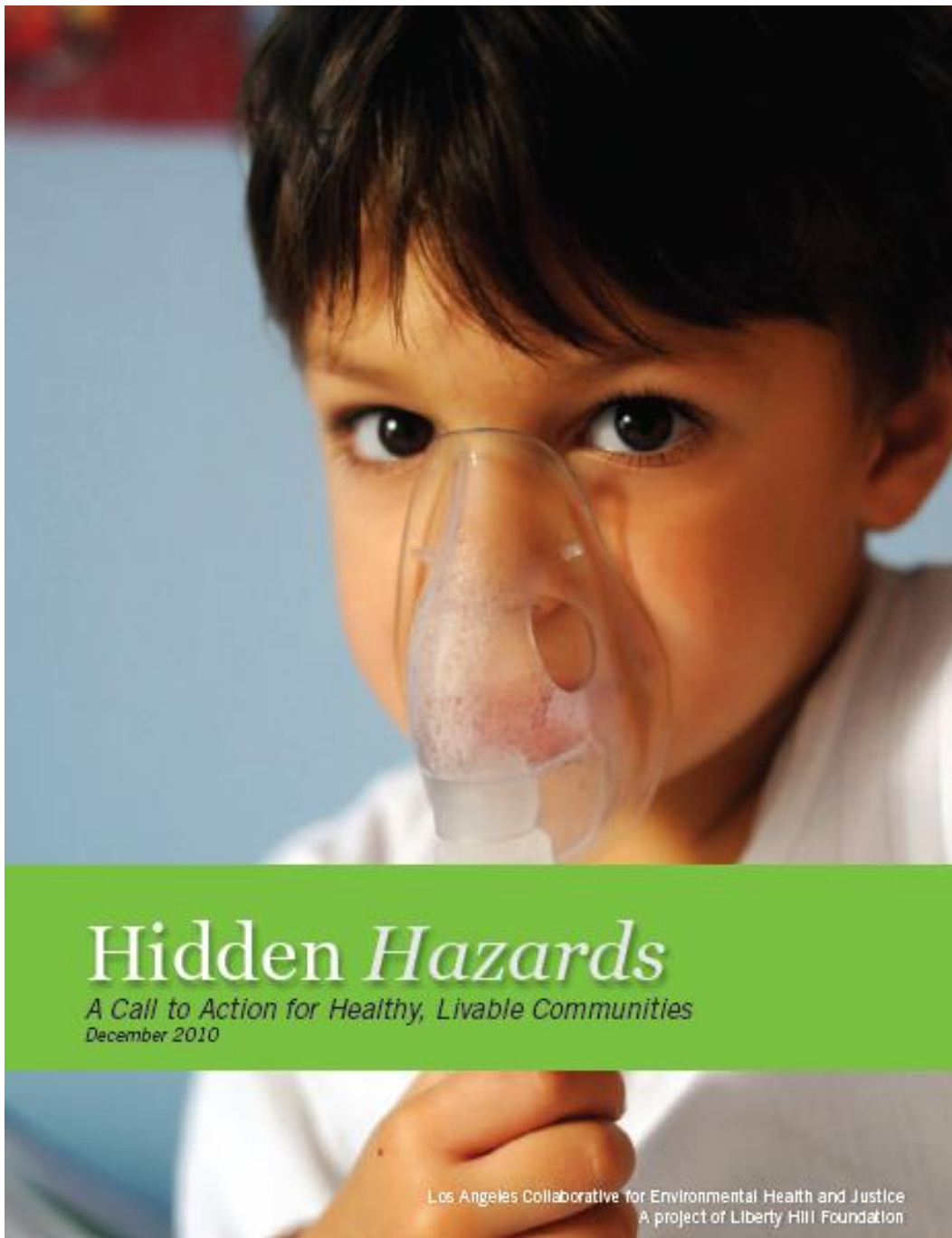


Boyle Heights



Wilmington Air Monitoring





Making Change

Released in Boyle Heights (East LA) a new study of “ground-truthing” in eight communities

Featured in the LA Times that morning and on [TV](#)

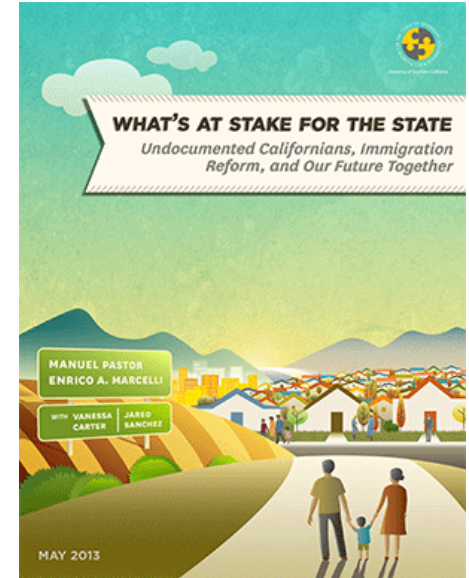
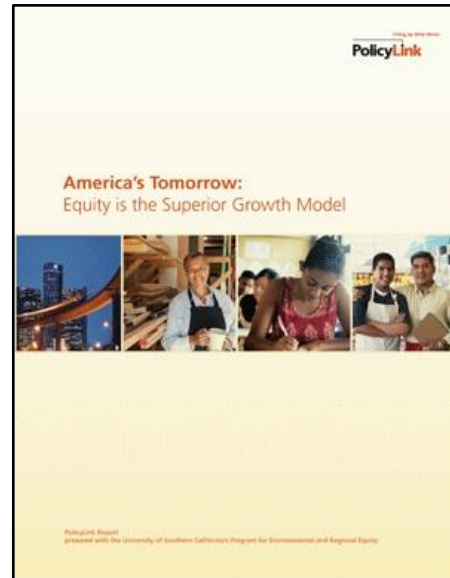
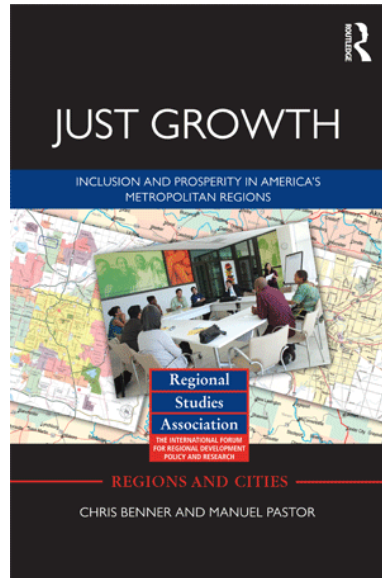
Four City Council Members introduced a resolution to create “green zones” in the city of Los Angeles – which eventually passed!

Hidden Hazards

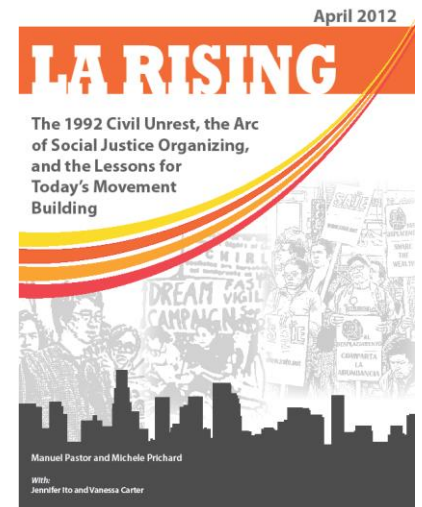
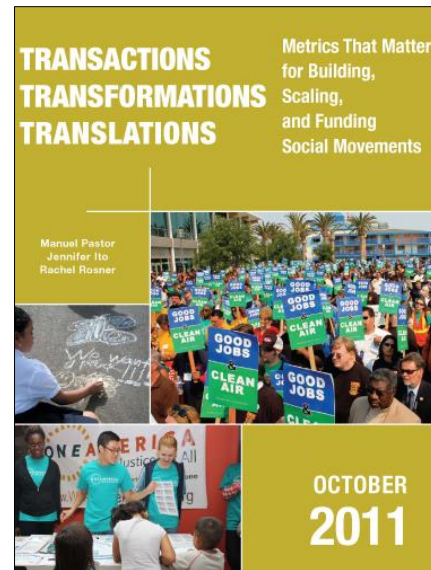
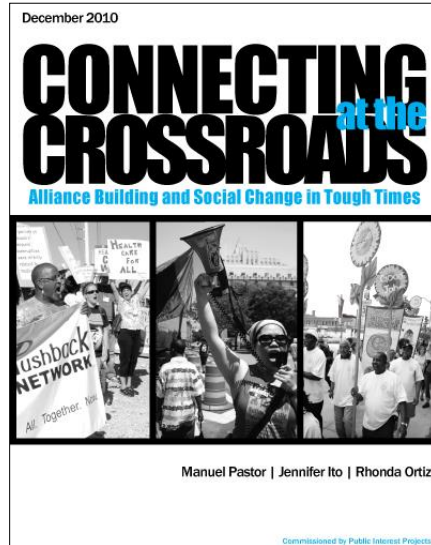
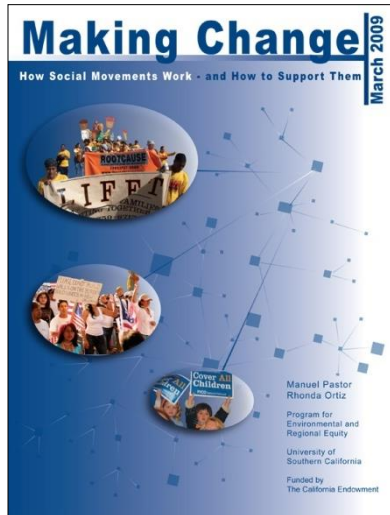
A Call to Action for Healthy, Livable Communities
December 2010

Los Angeles Collaborative for Environmental Health and Justice
A project of Liberty Hill Foundation

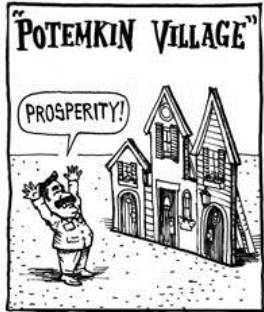
BUT IT'S MORE THAN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



AND IT'S MORE THAN JUST ISSUES



WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT ENGAGEMENT



Potemkin: a process that is just for show with the decisions already made and process is perfunctory



Kabuki: staged conflict with no clear search for common ground, usually done with dualing experts



Authentic: Dialogue is sought and community-based participatory research is a key element – as well as structures explicitly focused on resourcing the least powerful in the process (Corburn 2009)

WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT ORGANIZING

Projects demonstrate what's possible,

Policy makes the possible standard operating procedure but it's

Power that changes policy and community realities in fundamental and lasting ways



Organizing is about making those shifts in power – and it's long, hard **work** that is science as well as art

It takes a **village** – or better put an **ecosystem** in which multiple groups and efforts can play role

WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT NARRATIVE

- **Research** focuses on **facts** but the world often changes based on a **story**
- Partly because we forget this, we tend to focus on an **issue** – but **vision** is much deeper and **transformative**
- Part of that **transformation** is the way in which community engagement convinces people of their **voice** and **power**

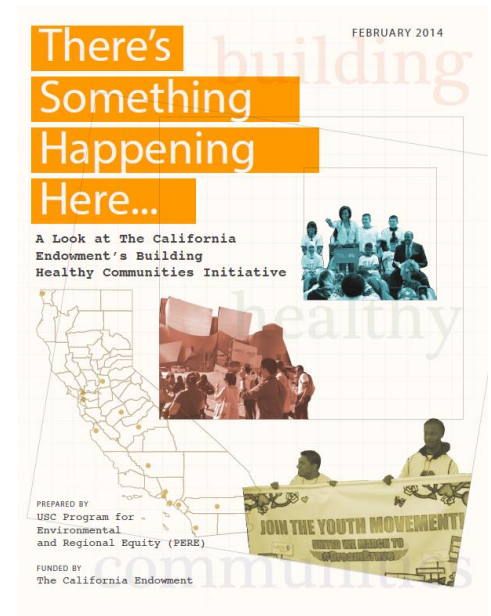
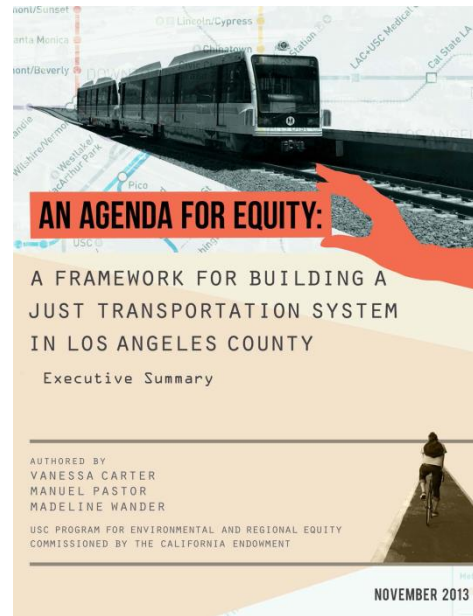


WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT COMMUNITY HEALTH

- **Communities** have inherent **knowledge** about issues and their **wisdom** can be effectively coupled with our **science**
- At the same time, **allies** need to be both **humble** and **confident** about what we bring
- Often the **underlying health** issue is **power** – community voice is not heard
- Community **organizing** is **good for your health** – both community and individual



FOR MORE . . .



<http://dornsife.usc.edu/pere>



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